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RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 0105
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SUBJECT: PORTUGAL RESPONSE IN ADVANCE OF NOVEMBER 19-20
GAERC

REF: SECSTATE 156474

Classified By: Dana M. Brown, Pol-Econ Officer, Embassy Lisbon
Reason 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) In advance of the November 19 GAERC, Deputy EU Correspondent Ana Filomena Rocha offered Portugal's views on reftel points, including the upcoming summit with Africa, Kosovo, Bosnia, Iran, Iraq, the Middle East, Burma, and Pakistan. She further mentioned that the GAERC plans to raise the political developments in Georgia at the meeting.

¶2. (SBU) EU-AFRICA SUMMIT (And China, Egypt Issues): Rocha reported that the GOP sent out invitations to the summit this week and is awaiting confirmations from participating nations. Two main documents for the summit -- the Joint EU-Africa Strategy and the Action Plan -- were finalized in Accra, but Ireland and Poland have raised a concern about the chapter on health and sexual reproduction. She said the two nations are concerned that the current language could be misinterpreted and viewed as giving EU support to abortion programs in Africa. Nevertheless, she noted that any attempt to reopen the package at this point could lead to another negotiation with Egypt over reparations for national patrimony. She predicted that Portugal would be able to persuade Ireland and Poland to drop the issue rather than reopen the package. Regarding China, Rocha explained that the trio presidencies are attempting to engage China in a discussion on sustainable development and human rights concerns with both the EU and Africa at the table.

¶3. (C) KOSOVO: Given the absence of a EU consensus, Rocha speculated that individual Member States would eventually decide individually whether to recognize an unilateral declaration of independence. Portugal is leaning towards recognition, she confided, but would wait until other major countries (the UK, France, and Germany) made the move first. (See comment in para 11.)

¶4. (C) BOSNIA: In keeping with the U.S. perspective, the GAERC will be used both to praise High Representative Lajack for his Bonn Powers efforts and criticize Dodik for his confrontational approach. Rocha reported wide support for the renewal of the EUFOR mission.

¶5. (SBU) IRAN: Rocha had not yet seen the IAEA Director General's report, but anticipated that the EU would be ready to strengthen sanctions should the IAEA findings be anything but positive.

¶6. (U) IRAQ: Foreign Minister Zebari will attend the GAERC lunch and will brief the ministers on the current security situation in Iraq. Rocha mentioned that the EU remains divided between the countries that support increased EU engagement and those reluctant to do so because of the security situation in Iraq. She did not anticipate any concrete decisions from this discussion.

¶7. (C) ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE: The EU views the Annapolis meeting as the beginning of a new chapter. She said Solana has plans to present new views at the GAERC. He may offer some new indications of the EU's strategy for the Annapolis meeting.

¶8. (U) BURMA: According to Rocha, the ministers will approve previously agreed upon conclusions on Burma but do not plan to hold any discussion.

¶9. (U) PAKISTAN: The EU agrees that the situation in Pakistan is of increasing concern, as outlined in the EU's declaration. Despite the EU's unease, it has little influence over Pakistan's actions, Rocha stated.

¶10. (C) GEORGIA: As an addition to the agenda, the EU will probably praise Georgia for lifting the state of emergency and for scheduling elections in January but will also acknowledge mistakes made by the Georgian government. Rocha stressed that the meeting will not be a forum to "Russia

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bash," despite the inclination of some Member States to do so. Lithuania has requested a discussion of an EU agreement on visa facilitation for the Georgians along the lines of the agreement with Russia, but Rocha claimed that Portugal views this process as the responsibility of the EU Commission rather an appropriate topic for the GAERC.

¶11. (C) COMMENT: Rocha responded to reftel points with her usual candor and offered a mix of both official positions and personal opinions, especially on Kosovo and Bosnia. Once again, on Kosovo, Rocha's comments differed from what other GOP interlocutors have said. While the PM's Diplomatic Advisor allowed privately that the final official EU position could be that individual states recognize unilateral independence if they want to, this is the first time anyone in the Portuguese government has stated explicitly that Portugal would be in the vanguard of Member states granting recognition. End comment.
Ballard